

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE
GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
FEBRUARY 6, 2015**

My name is Jennifer Herz and I am Assistant Counsel for the Connecticut Business & Industry Association (CBIA). CBIA has been representing Connecticut's employers for 200 years and today is proud to say the vast majority of our members are small companies employing less than 50 people.

CBIA has concerns with certain parts of SB 850 An Act Amending the Code of Ethics for Lobbyists to Redefine "Expenditure", Define "Grass Roots Lobbying" and Raise the Threshold for Lobbyist Registration.

Specifically, the new definition of "grass roots lobbying" and the associated threshold to register is concerning. The new definition of grass roots lobbying seemingly says that organizers of grass roots lobbying would now have to register as a lobbyist.

Requiring organizers of grass roots lobbying to register with the Office of State Ethics would have a broad impact on many community, business and advocacy groups in Connecticut. The public is encouraged to participate in the legislative and regulatory process and to require such groups to register may have a chilling effect.

While CBIA appreciates the intention of this bill we are very concerned with the current impact.

CBIA appreciates the opportunity to offer our comments and we look forward to the opportunity to work with the Committee and the Office of State Ethics on this issue.